

# King County Sheriff's Office

2009  
Annual  
Report



*Beyond our boundaries*

*From the Sheriff*

As the King County Sheriff's Office (KCSO) celebrates a number of accomplishments for 2009, our celebration is tempered by the horrific losses to law enforcement agencies in the region. While overall crime rates are still trending down for King County, the loss of colleagues in Seattle, Lakewood and Pierce County was a shock to everyone in our communities. It was a stark reminder of the risks that police officers take every day in serving the public. At the same time, the tremendous outpouring of public support was a reminder to each of us who serve that our role is greatly valued.

Our gratitude for that support bolsters our commitment to emphasizing a community oriented approach in our law enforcement efforts. With renewed attention to officer safety, we remain committed to working in partnership with our communities to fight and reduce

crime. This report will provide you with an overview of some of those efforts. It also highlights the valuable contract partnerships that allow KCSO to be the local police department for many of our suburban cities.

There is no higher priority for me than maintaining the safety of the public. And I extend my heartfelt appreciation to each one of you for the contributions you make in working with us to build safer communities.

A blue ink signature of Susan L. Rahr.

Susan L. Rahr  
Sheriff

[KingCountySheriff@kingcounty.gov](mailto:KingCountySheriff@kingcounty.gov)



# 2009 Crime Statistics

King County is an extremely diverse county with varying geographies, population densities, and pockets of differing crime trends and community concerns. Continuing annexations are also shifting the make-up of King County, changing the area that the King County Sheriff's Office (KCSO) patrols. These are just a few of the factors that can influence crime data for King County and create challenges for interpreting what the information means.

A review of the overall statistics for King County, including KCSO's contract jurisdictions, demonstrates a decreasing crime trend over the last several years. That overall downward trend did not change in 2009. However, total Part I Crimes, which include categories such as homicide, rape, robbery, and arson are up slightly, by 0.8% compared to 2008. Yet, even within that Part I category, while some crimes rates went

up, others went down, as illustrated in the graph below. Part II Crimes include categories such as vandalism, bicycle theft, and simple assault.

These crimes decreased by 0.6% from 2008.

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Each month, section commanders throughout the Sheriff's Office attend a "Crime Trends" meeting to assess crime patterns and discuss strategies for addressing these trends. Experience has shown that coordinating and

focusing resources on the most active offenders for enforcement is the most effective way to reduce crime in most categories. This year the King County Prosecutor's Office has also become an integral member of this strategic approach.

## Three things you can do to discourage crime:

- 1: Remember to lock windows and doors, even as the weather gets warmer
- 2: Be aware of your surroundings; for example, when you use an ATM or as you approach your parked car
- 3: When you see something strange, something that concerns you, go ahead and call it in—don't assume that somebody else will do it

In an emergency, call **911**.

For non-emergencies, call 206-296-3311 or statewide toll-free 800-344-4080.

Domestic Violence Hotline: 800-562-6025

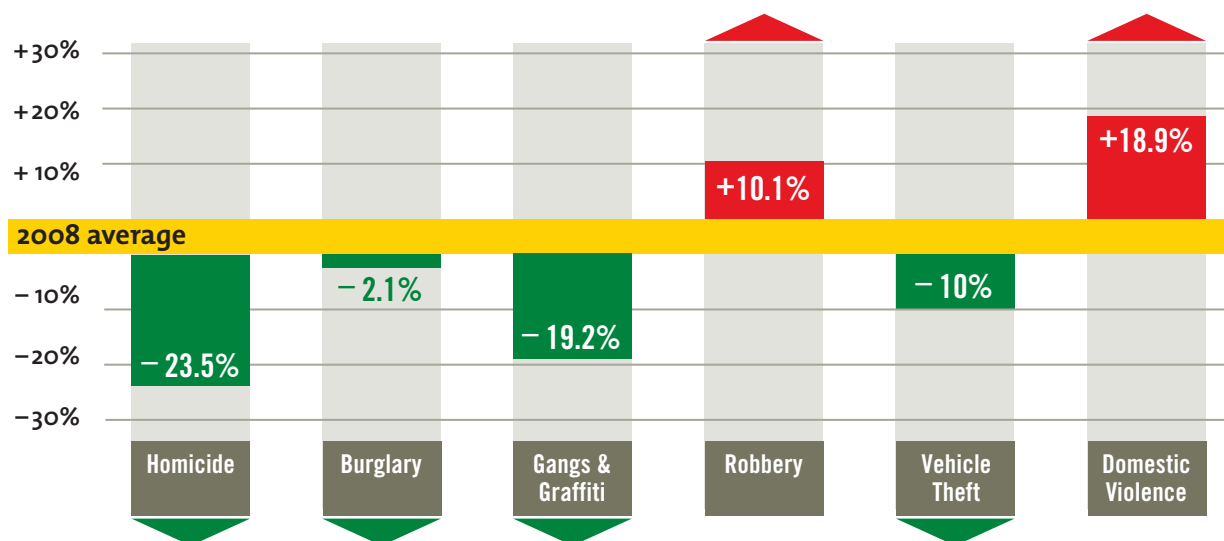
## 2009 crime increases or decreases from previous year



**Part I Crimes**, which include homicide, rape, robbery, and arson are up **less than 1%**.

**Part II Crimes**, which include vandalism, bicycle theft, and simple assault are **down .6%**.

*The graph at right is a sampling of Part I and Part II crimes of interest to residents in King County.*



## 911 Call Exposes Rent Fraud

As a new call receiver fielding non-emergency 911 calls for the King County Sheriff's Office, Lindsey Laktasich was accustomed to taking information for police reports over the phone.

But last October, she received a call that required more than just a little paperwork. The call came from a young man who had been trying to rent a house. After giving some of the deposit over to the would-be owner, this potential renter found out the house was for sale, which he found suspicious. He called 911.

Laktasich remembered reading something on the bulletin board where she works about a man trying to rent houses he didn't own.

"I gathered the caller's information and then called the precinct to find the lead detective on the case, who was in court that day," says Laktasich. "He called me back, and I gave him the information."

In less than two hours, the precinct set up a sting operation that netted the pseudo owner, who had been a previous tenant and was trying to rent the house to multiple people. "The detectives worked quickly to get their information together and arrest him," Laktasich says.

Sometimes it's not the years in a job that make a difference. Sometimes, what makes the difference is paying attention and connecting all the dots. Laktasich did just that.

## National Night Out: Bringing Neighbors Together

Getting to know your neighbors is always a good idea, so the National Association of Town Watch schedules the annual Night Out to help people to do just that.

"The objective is to strengthen the partnership and create a greater sense of understanding and cooperation between communities and the police," says Doug Reynolds, deputy and community crime prevention officer for the City of SeaTac.

Many of King County's cities participate in National Night Out, which brings together local business and community leaders, law enforcement agencies, civic groups, and neighborhood organizations to heighten crime and drug prevention, and strengthen neighborhood and law enforcement cooperation.

"It gives people an opportunity to ask questions of their elected officials and police officers," says Reynolds. "It's a wonderful opportunity to open a dialogue and to break down barriers, assumptions, and prejudices."

Last year, more than 36 million people in 15,000 communities from fifty states, U.S. territories, Canadian cities, and military bases worldwide participated in the event. This year, National Night Out will be held on Tuesday, August 3rd, so save the date and invite your neighbors to be part of this important and enjoyable night.

As Reynolds says, "This has to be a partnership. There are not enough police officers to guard every house, mailbox, or car. It takes a neighborhood community to make this successful."

*This year, National Night Out will be held on Tuesday, August 3rd*

## Shop with a Cop

*The King County Sheriff's Office and the Seattle Police Department teamed up to help 25 kids get ready for school during a shopping spree at the West Seattle Target. Pictured are KCSO Deputy Jessica Cline and student Diana Castillo. The "Shop With A Cop" event, sponsored by the Salvation Army and Target Stores, provided 200 local kids with a \$100 gift card to purchase back-to-school clothes and supplies.*



## Swift Water Rescue Training

*Marine Unit Deputies Chris Bedker and Matt Tighe practice self-rescue by using a tree limb as a "natural strainer" as part of their training to rescue others in fast moving waters.*





# Contracting with the Sheriff's Office

The King County Sheriff's Office (KCSO) receives more than \$65 million dollars from over 50 contract agreements with suburban communities, public agencies, and transit organizations. We provide the law enforcement services for local police departments in the Cities of Beaux Arts, Burien, Covington, Kenmore, Maple Valley, Newcastle, North Bend, Sammamish, SeaTac, Shoreline, Skykomish and Woodinville.

Marine patrol services on Lake Washington or Lake Sammamish are also provided for the Cities of Beaux Arts, Bellevue, Kenmore, Kirkland, Issaquah, Lake Forest Park and Redmond. The Sheriff's Office is also the law

enforcement service provider for Metro, Sound Transit and the Muckleshoot Tribe.

Our contract customers set their own policing priorities. They choose the type and level of service they need. They decide how many positions they will fund and who is assigned to their police department. Contracting gives our customers access to high quality policing at a more economical price, freeing up local tax dollars to support other community priorities, like parks and roads, for example.

## Value of Contracting

### Reduced Cost Burden

- *Shared Expenses & Staffing*

### Local Identity

- *Customize Vehicles & Uniforms*
- *Promote Community Priorities*

### Customer Service Oriented

- *Coordinated, Rapid Police Response*
- *Local Control & Flexibility*
- *Drives Innovation & Efficiency*

## Win-Win for the Taxpayer

Contract policing provides a mutual benefit for both

*continued on page 4*



## Positive Dialogues With Youth

School Resource Officer Deputy Eric White and Police Activities League Professional Mentor Jimmy Brown collaborate together in their work at Thomas Jefferson High School. SRO Deputy White, who works full time in the school through a KCSO contract with Federal Way School District, spends his time building rapport with the school's 2,000 students in an effort to start positive dialogues between law enforcement and youth. Deputy White focuses on talking with students about such issues as the importance of education, substance abuse prevention, criminal and constitutional law, youth fighting, search and seizure, motor vehicle law, and personal protection. He also educates parents and school staff about emerging youth issues related to violence, youth gangs, drug identification and intervention, violence intervention, and the criminal justice system. Jimmy Brown also provides a crucial link to students by mentoring them around problems they may be having in school, at home, with grades, and student health issues.



*SeaTac Police Chief Jim Graddon leads an SeaTac Police Department special staff meeting.*





*Officer Henry Pacey checks brake adjustments on a commercial vehicle at the County Roads Facility in Maple Valley.*



*Patrolling local parks on bicycle enables Newcastle officer Melissa Deer to cover areas not accessible by car.*



*City of Kenmore Police Traffic Officer Jeffrey Durrant talks with a citizen during a traffic stop.*

### *Contracting... continued from page 3*

the residents of unincorporated King County and residents of our contract cities. Each shares the expertise and equipment of specialty units that would otherwise be too expensive for each individual entity to support. Also, by sharing the resources of central records management, 911 communications dispatch and evidence storage, both entities benefit from economies of scale gained from centralized services.

Contract policing also saves tax dollars through the practice of “cross dispatching.” This practice allows unincorporated area and adjoining contract city areas to dispatch officers “across” jurisdictional boundaries to provide backup for each other on calls requiring two officers. Because of this, it is possible to safely staff at a lower level in both jurisdictions knowing that backup will be available.

### **KCSO Specialty Services**

- ★ Major Crimes Investigations
- ★ SWAT Response
- ★ Major Accident Investigations
- ★ Search & Rescue
- ★ Helicopter Support
- ★ Marine Patrol
- ★ Hostage Negotiations
- ★ Fire Investigations
- ★ Bomb Detection
- ★ School & Community Resource Officers



## **Airport Deputies Take the Heat**

The King County Sheriff's office is a policing organization that is versatile and committed to delivering the services its customers need. In fact, we're so versatile that we provide both contract police and fire services to King County International Airport.

And in 2009 the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) accredited nine KCSO Airport deputies as firefighters. The accreditation is a peer-driven system that certifies individuals who pass examinations based on stringent professional qualifications approved by the National Fire Protection Association.

“The state of Washington has adopted their curriculum,” says Bryan Howard, Police and Fire Chief for the King County International Airport. Howard is a KCSO Captain with a broad range of experience, having served 19 years with the Sheriff's Office.

The accreditation is important because the examinations focus on safe practices. “When people have this accreditation, they immediately earn respect from their peers in the industry,” says Howard. “For our mutual aid partners in the Seattle Fire Department and other departments that we work with, they know that we are truly firefighters and have met that required level of training.”

The nine deputies will also be taking exams in 2010 to receive their Level 2 IFSAC accreditation.



## Sammamish Names Police Officer of the Year

In just 10 months last year, Deputy Steve Johnson pulled 28 impaired drivers off the streets of Sammamish and he ticketed another 61 for speeding through the City's streets.

Johnson has devoted much of his 11 years in law enforcement to keeping the roads safe from drivers impaired by illegal or prescription drugs and alcohol. For his efforts, he was presented with the 2009 Sammamish Police Officer of the Year and the 2009 Sammamish Deputy of the Year awards.

"I try to be as visible as I can, especially at night," says the long-time King County Sheriff's Office deputy who serves an officer with the City of Sammamish Police Department, "I try to do a lot of traffic stops, and even if I don't write a ticket, I take the time to talk to people."

Johnson, who is one of Washington State's 225 DUI enforcement officers, recognizes that

educating motorists about the dangers of DUI is an ongoing process.

We try to remind drivers that DUI is an expensive mistake if they get caught," he says. "It averages \$8,000 to \$10,000, when you look at lawyer fees, court assessments, civil penalties, insurance rates, and traffic fines. At a minimum, we try to educate people and tell them it's a really dangerous and expensive decision."

He adds, "We hope we make a small dent. And maybe the next time someone is at a party or a bar, had too much to drink, and then considers getting behind the wheel, we hope they'll say, 'maybe I shouldn't drive.'"



*Steve Johnson fills out his report after a routine traffic stop*



## Welcoming our New Chiefs



Four of our contract customers proudly welcomed new Chiefs in 2009. Left to right: Sydney Jackson of Woodinville; Dan Morrow with the Muckleshoot Tribe; Nate Elledge of Sammamish; and Mark Toner of North Bend.





## The Best Drivers Training for the Worst



Deputy Tiffany Atwood, an Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC) instructor, prepares for classroom instruction at the EVOC training site. KCSO commissioned officers who drive fully-marked police vehicles take this mandated 8-hour EVOC course biennially. Throughout the training, instruction is given on driving policy, vehicle skill and critical maneuver dynamics, and application training during mock pursuits and emergency response scenarios. Each training cycle brings with it new scenario elements and course design changes to make the training as realistic and practical as possible.



## Air Support Unit Rescues and Recovers Injured Hiker, 19 Others

With its fleet of five helicopters operating out of the King County International Airport, the KCSO Air Support Unit provides a sometimes critical link in both fighting crime and conducting search and rescue efforts for the King County Sheriff's Office.

The Unit's main focus is on air support for the many public safety agencies within the Puget Sound region. Three of the Unit's helicopters are equipped with state of the art video, mapping, and communications equipment that enables the deputy-pilots and crew to assist police and medical personnel on the ground, day or night.

Such was the case last October, when the KCSO Air Support Unit responded to a call to rescue a hiker injured near North Bend and the Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie River.

Deputies Keith Potter and John Pugh, flying patrol support and equipped with night vision goggles, were dispatched to search for the hiker and quickly pinpointed him among the tall trees along very steep terrain. Deputy Peter Linde moved out onto the helicopter's right skid and then swung deputy Richard Barton, suspended from a hoist cable, out of the aircraft.

Barton was then lowered to the ground, where he splinted the hiker's injured leg, attached a safety harness, and moved the hiker to a clearing under the hovering helicopter. The hiker was hoisted into the helicopter and transported to waiting medical personnel in North Bend. Mission complete.

In 2009, the KCSO Air Support Unit rescued and recovered 20 people in 37 search and rescue missions, assisted in the arrest or capture of 69 suspects, and flew 1122 hours in 936 calls. And, true to KCSO's mission of partnership, it also assisted just about every law enforcement agency within King County, as well as many more throughout King County.





## Animal Abuse: a Warning Sign

"The abuse or neglect of animals is a crime that can lead to other things," says patrol sergeant Nancy Spadoni. "It's a canary in the coal mine. If we can stop it, we might be able to stop violence in a home."

Spadoni, who works out of KCSO Precinct 3 in Maple Valley, has handled a lot of these cases in her 22-year career with the Sheriff's Office. Because of her research into and expertise on animal abuse and neglect, she has trained numerous law enforcement and medical personnel throughout the region about how to spot the signs of trouble.

"Some people who abuse animals also abuse people, whether it's child abuse or domestic

violence," Spadoni points out. "The single crime of animal cruelty may be the tip of the iceberg as to what is wrong with that particular situation, and, usually, we need to look deeper into the family dynamics."

She emphasizes the importance of seeing the cruelty of animals for what it may potentially be—a link to larger abuse. "People are going to put people first and animals second, and I understand that," she says. "But there is a connection, and to dismiss one in favor of the other is not looking at the big picture."

If you suspect animal cruelty or neglect in a home, please call 206-296-PETS(7387).

## Safe and Sound

*King County Metro and Sound Transit officers vigilantly maintain their presence to assure passengers a safe and uneventful commute.*



## Real Life Cold Cases

Cutting edge technologies are helping KCSO's Major Crimes Unit make new progress in cold cases that had otherwise been stalled—some of these cases going all the way back to the 70's.

In fact, the Unit currently has 180 of these cases, many including missing persons who are likely homicide victims.

"There are promising new DNA technologies, when just a few years ago we were stuck," Says Detective Scott Tompkins, a 19-year veteran of the King County Sheriff's Office. "Now we can do something about them."

With the help of that new technology and Detective Jim Allen, another member of the Major Crimes team, the Unit solved the murder

of 16-year-old girl found in her back yard on Valentine's Day in 1975. She had a knife stuck in her back. All the leads went cold back then, but thanks to good sleuthing and newly available DNA, the murderer was convicted in 2009, sentenced to 16 years in prison.

And the work continues. "We are taking DNA for a lot of crimes now," says Tompkins, "and in the last couple of months we have been getting lab results back that are pretty promising, as far as DNA is concerned."

To report or get more information about KCSO Cold Cases, please contact our Major Crimes Unit at 206-296-7530, or go to [www.kingcounty.gov/safety/sheriff](http://www.kingcounty.gov/safety/sheriff) to review cases.





## A sad farewell...

To say that it will take five or six people to replace Barb Peters would be an understatement. “Her wisdom, persistence, ability to speak her mind, her love and generosity made her an invaluable asset to our community,” says Pam Odegard, a volunteer with KCSO’s Precinct 4. Barb passed away last October after a courageous battle with liver cancer.

Those who worked with Barb marveled at the amount of work she was able to coordinate and complete on her own. The wife, mother, and grandmother was a council



member for unincorporated north Highline, a fire commissioner, and a volunteer with the King County Sheriff’s Office. She raised more than \$1,200 for the Steve Cox Memorial Fund, spoke regularly at the SeaTac/Burien Citizens’ Police Academy, and held an open house every year for National Night Out.

“Barb was the go-to person for fire commissioners, council members, Block Watch captains, neighbors, volunteers, and police officers alike,” says Odegard. “She would provide suggestions when solutions seemed impossible. She was a friend.”

And she will be dearly missed.

## Prints Lead to Murder Suspect

The King County Sheriff’s Office’s AFIS/Identification Tenprint Unit is a little-known area of law enforcement that can have a big impact on crime prevention in the region.

Take, for instance, the day in April when Tenprint examiner, Eva Hess, received a Questionable Identity (QID) request to run prints on a suspect that the Tukwila Police Department had pulled over. The man in question gave officers numerous names, all of which turned out to be aliases.

With the help of Hess, the man was identified as a wanted fugitive. Further research found that he was wanted on two murder charges, attempted murder, armed robbery, home invasion, felony firearms, and assault with the intent to murder. In fact, the Detroit Police Department and The FBI were both looking for him.

“The detective in Detroit called me right away and thanked me for the assistance we provided in finding the suspect’s real identity,” says Hess. “They had been working on his case for a year.”

Hess says that providing Tenprint identification to all of KCSO’s partners gives her great satisfaction. “We are behind the scenes, and it’s nice to be able to help police officers in any way possible, especially getting them all the information they need to catch criminals,” she says.

“Other agencies are confident in our work and our ability to get things done, and I feel satisfaction at end of the day because I’m able to help get people off the streets that shouldn’t be there.”



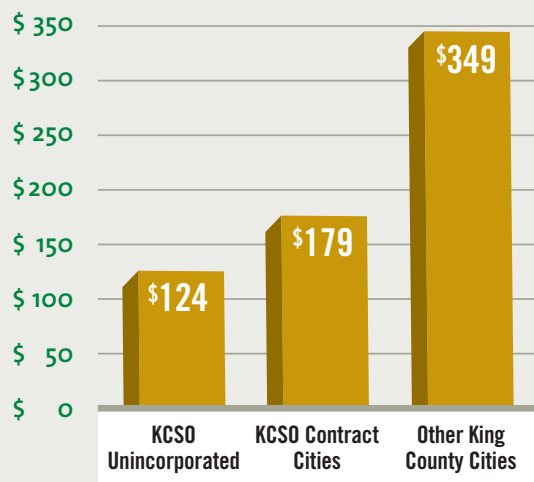
*Staff from the Jail ID, Tenprint, and Latent Units work together to identify individuals through the collection and comparison of inmates’ fingerprints and latent (crime scene) prints.*



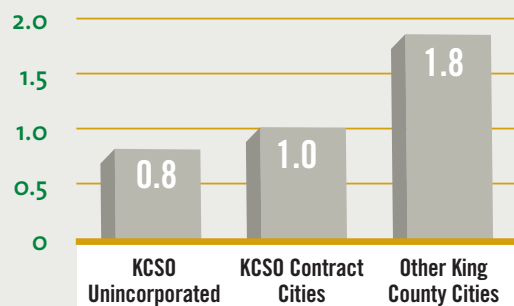


# King County Sheriff's Office by the Numbers

## Cost of Police to Each Resident in 2009



## Comparison of Sworn Employees per 1,000 Residents in 2009



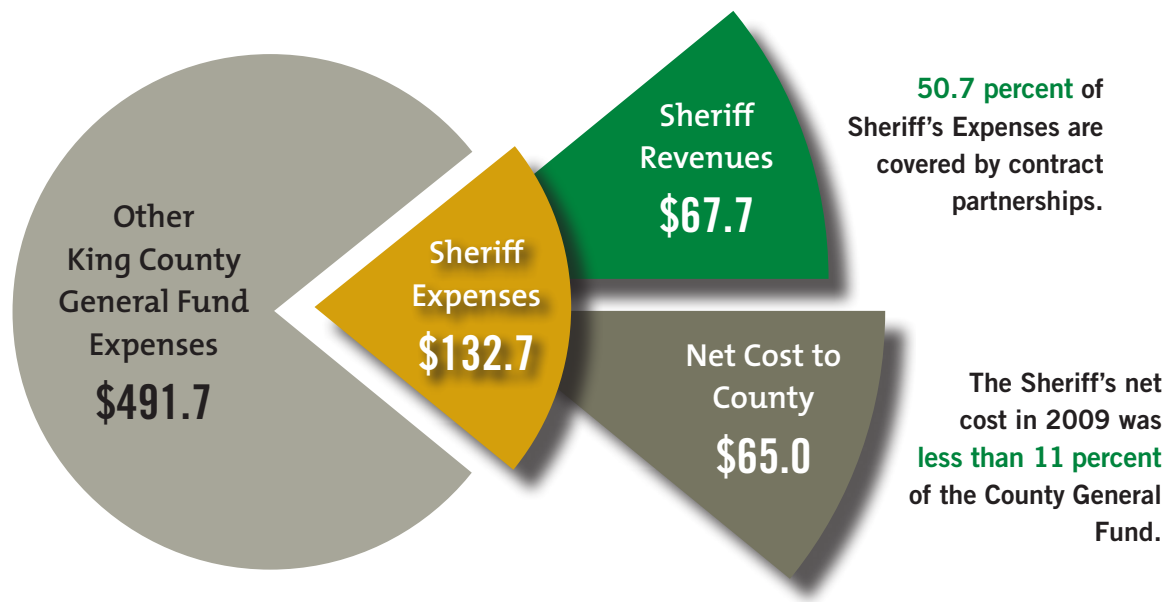
The total Sheriff's budget in 2009 was \$132.7 million. About \$67.7 million, or 51 percent, of this amount comes from our 50 contract partnerships. The Sheriff provides professional police services for municipalities, transit authorities, Indian Tribes, and school districts across the county. The Sheriff's net cost to the County General Fund in 2009 was \$65.0 million, less than 11 percent of the County General Fund.

The Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) budget is also managed by the Sheriff's Office but is separate from the Sheriff's general budget. All AFIS costs are fully supported by a six-year levy approved by the voters in 2006. The AFIS budget for 2009 was \$16.9 million.

## 2009 King County Sheriff's Office Expenditures and Revenues

*as a portion of the Total County General Fund*

Total County General Fund: \$624.4 million



Leadership • Integrity

Our **vision** is to improve public safety by leading and promoting collaboration and professionalism in the criminal justice system.

The **mission** of the King County Sheriff's Office is to provide quality, professional, regional and local law enforcement services tailored to the needs of individual communities to improve the quality of life.



*This report was produced by the*

**King County Sheriff's Office**

516 Third Avenue, W-116  
Seattle, WA 98104-2312  
206-296-4155

**[www.kingcounty.gov/safety/sheriff](http://www.kingcounty.gov/safety/sheriff)**

*This report is available in alternative formats.*

*Special thanks to the  
KCSO Photo Unit for  
their contributions*

Service • Teamwork